

**Remarks to the Community at
Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado
Springs**

May 31, 1995

Thank you very much. It's wonderful to see all of you, all of the service personnel, all of your families, all the kids who are here. I thank you for coming. And I just want you to know I kept the rain away. They thanked me at the Air Force Academy, and I said, "You know, when you're President, you get blamed for so many things you didn't do; it's okay to take credit for a thing or two you didn't do, either." [Laughter] But I'm very, very glad to be here, glad to see all of you. I want to thank Chief Master Sergeant Sue Turner for her introduction. If she were running for office, she'd get a lot of votes just on being brief, I think. [Laughter] And I thank her for what she said. I'm glad to be here with your Governor, Roy Romer, General Ashy, and others.

Earlier this month—I want to say something serious, if I might, for a moment—our Nation lost six patriotic reservists of the 302d Airlift Wing based here at Peterson. Today, I, as their President, just want to remember them with my respects, my gratitude, my thanks. And I'd like to ask if we could all just have a brief moment of silence in their memory, please.

[At this point, a moment of silence was observed.]

Thank you very much.

Like the Rockies, the men and women here of Peterson stand tall and strong and proud. You're always ready. You are the sentinels of our air sovereignty. You're the home base for our space command and for NORAD. You are our eyes in space.

I did a couple of interviews yesterday with some Colorado newspapers, and one of them asked me if we still needed eyes in space since the cold war was over. And I said, the last time I checked we had more stuff up in space every day; I thought we needed more eyes, not fewer. I thank you for what you're doing.

You have made America safer. You have made the world safer. And as we face the new challenges of the 21st century, you know

as well as I do that the American military will continue to play a vital role, not only in the defense of our freedom and our security but also in advancing the cause of democracy and freedom throughout the world.

We have seen painfully in the United States in the last several months, first at the World Trade Center and then at the awful incident at Oklahoma City, that our security can be threatened in a global economy with open borders and lots of personal freedom here at home as well as beyond our borders. We had those two terrorist incidents: One of them occurred from people I believe were deeply disturbed and way off track within our country; another occurred because this is a free country and people can come and go here, and people who bore us ill will and wanted to destroy a symbol of American democracy came into this country and set that bomb at the World Trade Center.

I'm also happy to tell you that other sentinels of freedom working to thwart terrorism stopped two terrible incidents that were planned, one to blow up another bomb in New York and another that was designed to take some aircraft out of the air, flying out of the West Coast going over the Pacific.

But we now know that the security threats we'll face in the future, rooted in terrorism and organized crime and drug trafficking, are closely tied to things the military has had to work on for years, trying to stem the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, stand up to rogue states, and protect our security interests around the world. We're going to have to fight on all these fronts, and you're going to have to continue to be the best trained, best equipped, best motivated, most flexible military in the world for us to succeed.

I am committed to making sure that you always are that and to doing whatever we have to do to improve the quality of life and the conditions of living, so that the best people in America want to be in the military and want to stay in the military.

Since I have been President, I have twice had to go back to Congress to ask for large appropriations totaling over \$35 billion to help to maintain our training, our readiness, and our quality of life. And this year I asked the Congress for a supplemental appropria-

tion to cover contingencies in the Defense Department so we could fund a pay increase at the maximum legal level allowable and continue to make improvements in readiness and the quality of life. We are going to continue to do that. If you're committed to serving America, the people who make the decisions about investments in your future should be committed to making sure that you can serve and succeed, that you can have good families and a good life in the United States military. And we are very grateful to you for that.

Let me say, what I most wanted to do was to have a chance to say thank-you personally and to go down the row and shake hands with the children. And while I am very good at stopping the rain, I am not good at keeping it away forever. So I'm going to terminate my remarks with a heartfelt thank-you to all of you for your service to the United States.

God bless you all, and thank you. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:50 p.m. on the flight line. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Joseph W. Ashy, commander in chief, North American Aerospace Defense Command, commander in chief, U.S. Space Command, and commander, Air Force Space Command.

Interview With Jim Gransbery of the Billings Gazette in Billings, Montana May 31, 1995

Farm Bill

Mr. Gransbery. —envision sharp reductions in both mandatory and discretionary spending for farm programs and research. To what extent are you willing to go—a veto or whatever—to get a farm bill that adequately meets your funding requirements to protect farmers' income and future research?

The President. I'm willing to go quite a long way. You know, I went to Ames, Iowa, a couple of weeks ago to hold a rural conference to give agricultural interests from around the Middle West a chance to come in and testify on a strictly nonpartisan basis just to say what they thought ought to be done in the farm bill. And I pointed out that we had already put in our budget certain reductions in agricultural supports that were

consistent with the GATT agreement we made with Europe and the others, other countries, to try to get everybody to reduce their agricultural supports.

Now, the—and I think the numbers that are in the marks, in the Republican marks are excessive. You know, we might be able to cut some more, but there's a limit to how much we can cut and still be competitive. Up here, you know, you've got special problems. I worked for a very long time to get this agreement last year with the Canadians on wheat to limit imports and then to set up this commission to try to resolve that problem.

But I think that it's a great mistake to look at these farm subsidies just as sort of special Government spending programs instead of looking at them in the context of how we do in international markets. If everybody did away with their protectionism, we wouldn't have to spend a plug nickel on agriculture in America. Our people would do just fine.

And so, I think the proper way to do this is through negotiations with our competitors and to keep driving the subsidies down in a way that opens up markets to our farmers and tries to keep—therefore, have some reasonable relationship of the competitiveness of American agriculture to the incomes people can earn.

If we cut excessively, one or two things, or both, will happen: You will either have substantial losses of American markets—markets for American farmers, or you'll have a lot of individual farmers go under and corporate farms take them over, or both.

So I think it's very important—and Secretary Glickman, the new Agriculture Secretary, as I'm sure you know, was a Congressman from Kansas for 18 years, knows a lot about agriculture. He's out and around the country now talking to farmers, trying to continue to get more ideas about what we can do to put some more flexibility in the farm program that the farmers have asked us for, what we can do to help make more farm income from within the United States by diversifying products and building on the base farm production to develop new products and a lot of that.

But we are still going to have to be very careful, not only about how much farm